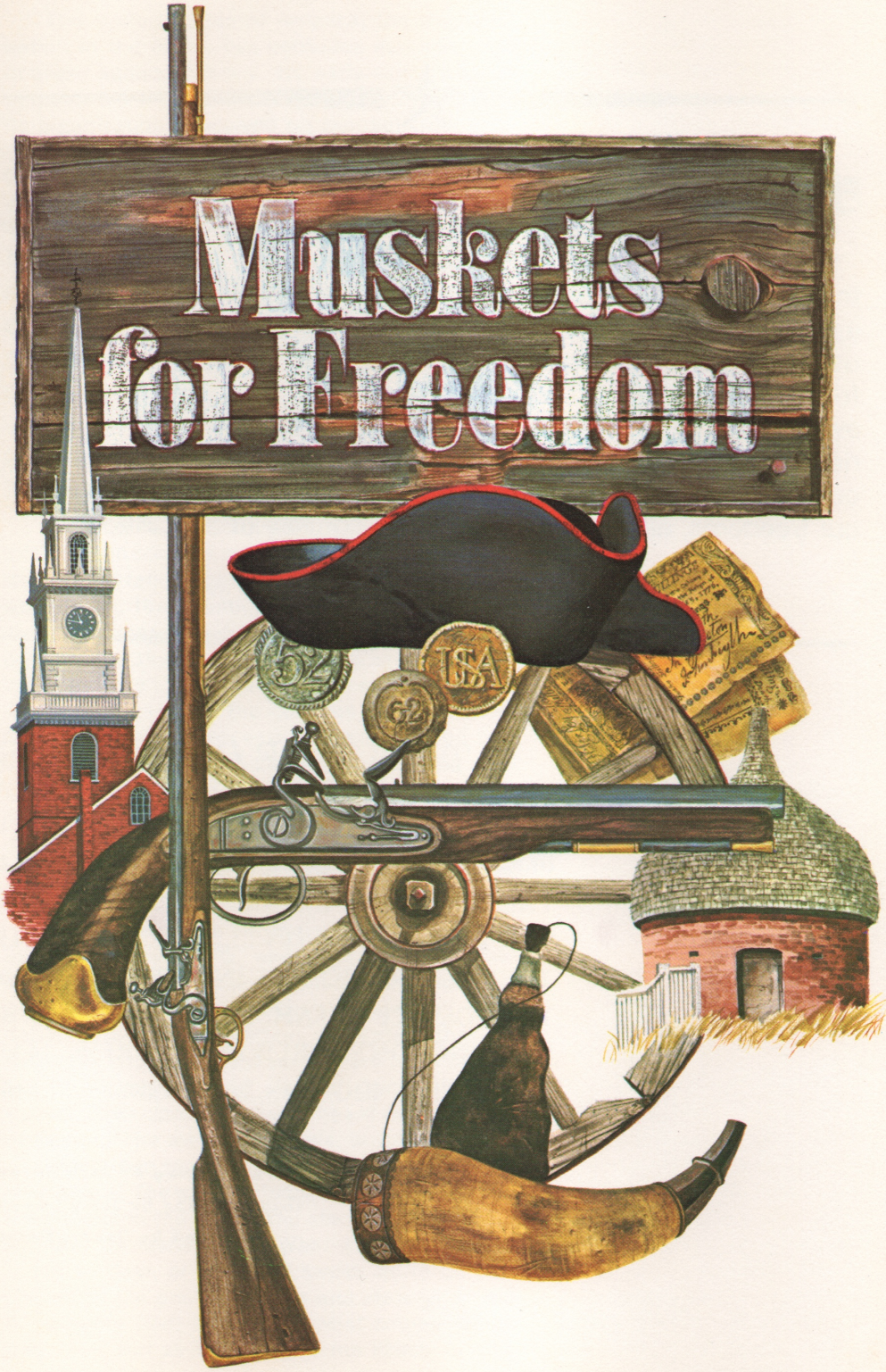
Muskets
for Freedom

This book has been created and is presented in the sincere belief that our founding fathers deserve this homage and that the citizens of the United States of America should pause in appreciation for them and their efforts. It is designed to re-educate us on the facts of our national origins, to inspire us by bringing into focus the fortitude and patriotism of our founders, to make us more aware of our great national heritage. After approximately two centuries of national existence, we feel it appropriate to re-dedicate ourselves to the perpetuation of our traditions, the maintenance of our freedoms, and to the fairness and equality of our justice.

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Designed by Dennis Gates

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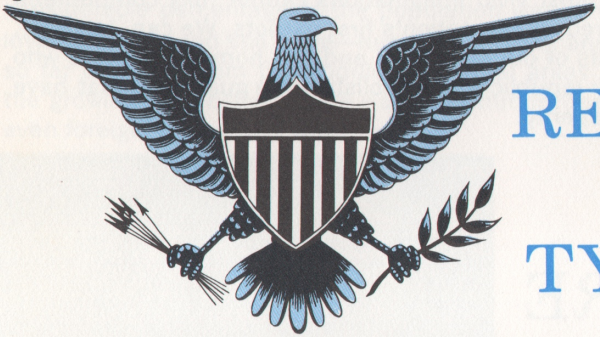
The United States of America, the mightiest nation in the world, two centuries ago was born in anger against tyranny. Its early existence was perpetuated through bravery and determination, its organization conceived on humanitarian principles from wisdom, and its growth accomplished by an independent people with access to the greatest store of natural resources in the world.



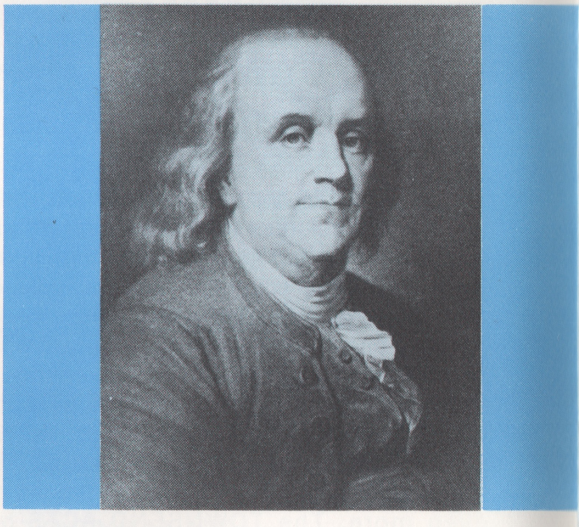
RESPONSE TO TYRANNY

Prior to 1760, the entire population was divided into thirteen colonies subject to Great Britain. From the elegant landed gentry to the homespun backwoodsmen, the colonists and the colonies had many differences and few ties. But a people who pay the penalty for a common injustice have an immediate tie . . . and a common enemy. A unity was kindled among the colonies by oppressive British control and excessive taxes. It flared into violence because of the SUGAR ACT of 1764, and the STAMP ACT of 1765 fed the flames of revolt even more. The TOWNSEND ACTS of 1767 inflamed most of the colonists to open revolution and finally the firebrand of Patrick Henry inspired even the most hesitant to aggressive action.

It was during the second Virginia Convention in Richmond in 1775, when Patrick Henry presented to the convention a set of resolutions for putting the colony "in a posture of defense", hotly debated by the convention delegates, that he made his impassioned plea—"There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable, and let it come! . . . Gentlemen may cry: Peace, Peace!—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun . . . brethren are already in the field! Why stand we idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

Inspired by his oratory the convention passed his resolutions and the colony began to gird itself for war. At the Second Continental Congress a few months later, George Washington was made Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army and entered upon a career which was destined to be recorded in the annals of history and in the hearts of Americans.

Two centuries later, in a mood of celebration, we examine the birth of our nation from a vantage point of wealth and power, secure in its strength, comfortable in its affluence. Even those with the most vivid imaginations cannot fully comprehend the privation and sacrifice endured by the nation's first patriots. We can, however, examine and appreciate the fruits of our birthright, and pay homage to those who suffered and fought to create our republic and established the guidelines that have resulted in our strength and prosperity.



BEFORE THE BEGINNING

In 1775, the population of the colonies was as diverse and divided as it could conceivably have been; English, German, Irish and French dominated as far as national origins were concerned, but nearly every European nation was represented, including about five per cent who were of African origin. The colonists were divided by religion, race, politics and station. England had for years deported many of her convicts to America, where they usually became bonded servants for a period of from four to fourteen years. Most of the Africans were slaves, some were bonded servants and a small minority had become free citizens. The landed gentry, who enjoyed a position of untitled nobility, were the extreme opposites from the poor—slave, free or bonded—in philosophy, political objectives, ethics and religion . . . in fact, nearly every opinion or objective of importance to them. Thousands of Americans had an inbred allegiance to Britain which they were unable to discard . . . they were to become known as Tories and perhaps 100,000 of them fled the country when the war was over.

But there was strength among the colonists, when the common resentment to English authority took precedence over all of their divisions. They had freedoms that did not exist for the poor people of Europe. They were sustained by the very valid hope that any of them could become landowners and prosper without restraint and restriction. At their disposal were the natural resources of a great continent and those disposed toward trade and commerce believed that as a free people, there would be no limits imposed on their opportunities. In the final analysis, the common resentment to English injustice and the opportunities afforded them as a free people became the factors which united them in a common effort—to fight for freedom. And the war was soon to come.

Just before the outbreak of hostilities, the wealth, power and population of the 13 colonies, compared to Great Britain, was woefully small. A thin, gray line of homespun-dressed settlers stretched from Maine to Georgia. Many of these people lived on crude farms, hacked out of the wilderness, or in the wilderness itself. The occasional small industry was not producing the materials of war. Cannons were not produced in America until it seemed war was inevitable and rifles and small arms were made by individual amateur or professional gunsmiths. There was no army or navy and the state militia was generally undisciplined and ill-trained. A considerable percentage of the population was in slavery or bondage, many were loyal to Britain and still more—hunters, trappers and boundary-line pioneers—were so far removed from the populated coastal areas as to be almost unaffected by the growing dissension. There was no common treasury, no coin of the realm and even foreign money was scarce.

"I cannot but lament . . . the impending calamities Britain and her Colonies are about to suffer, from great imprudencies on both sides—passion governs, and she never governs wisely—anxiety begins to disturb my rest."

Benjamin Franklin—February 5, 1775

THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

By comparison, Great Britain appeared to have advantages that would make victory inevitable for her in the event of war. She was the unquestioned mistress of the seas with a navy capable of competing favorably with the combined navies of the two other great powers, France and Spain, and her colonies and dependencies stretched around the world. In addition to the population of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, which exceeded 12 million people, she could draw on the manpower and wealth of her far-flung empire which consisted of most of the settled North American continent and India, as well as countless possessions such as Bermuda, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua, Montserrat, Barbuda, Tobago, Granada, Dominica and other islands studding the Caribbean Sea. Gibraltar, Minorca and Senegal formed part of her empire, she had possessions in Africa, and Newfoundland was a well-established territory.

Her trade flourished and wealth from around the world poured into her treasuries. The industrial revolution was making her self-sufficient industrially and industry was building a strong middle-class. Her army was not the largest in the world, but her soldiers were as good as the best, and the tremendous English Navy and merchant fleet made it possible to quickly move men and supplies anywhere they might be needed. Logistically, there would have seemed to be little hope for the American victory. But men with strong motives and resentments seldom try to define the chances of success . . . they simply fight. And the war was soon to come.

SEQUENCE OF ACTION

Political as well as military supremacy were the aims of both Great Britain and the American Colonists. The British desired not only to destroy American military resistance, but to restore royal rule and to bring the colonies back into the empire. While using force the British government also sought to negotiate a reconciliation on increasingly liberal terms, but the policy was ineffective and actually interfered with their military effort. The Americans, before 1776, were fighting to defend their rights and liberties within the empire, however, after July 4, 1776, they fought for political independence.

Seventeen major battles, three major sieges and the capture of one British garrison highlighted the military activities of the Revolutionary War, while the Continental Congress passed the legislation needed to mold a new independent nation. Paul Revere's famous ride was about the last action of historical importance to precede the first blood-letting of the war proper.

APRIL 18, 1775

Revere sculled across the Charles River, mounted a horse on the Cambridge side and began one of the most famous rides of our history. His primary purpose was to get a message to Sam Adams and John Hancock in Lexington, Mass., that their lives were in danger, and to pass the word that the British were marching toward Concord to destroy supplies stashed there. On the same night, British General Thomas Gage sent 700 crack troops to capture Adams, Hancock and the Concord cache. They were intercepted in the early morning of

APRIL 19, 1775

by approximately 130 American militiamen. Someone fired a single shot and the War had begun. Eight Americans (no British) died in the skirmish and the Redcoat column moved on to Concord. Having been warned in advance, most of the American supplies had been moved out and several hundred militiamen attacked the British, and now both sides had suffered casualties. The small battle was later immortalized by Ralph Waldo Emerson in his

CONCORD HYMN . . .

By the rude bridge that arched
the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round
the world.

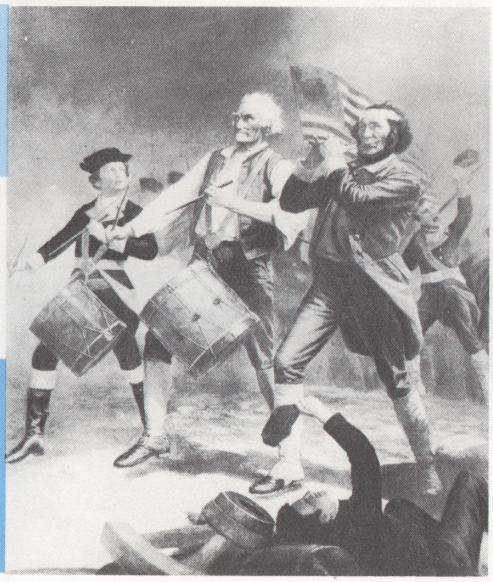
And so it began and in early

MAY, 1775

Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold led 83 Americans in the capture of the 45-man British garrison at Fort Ticonderoga, N.Y., at the southern tip of Lake Champlain. The subsequent capture of Crown Point, N.Y. on May 11 gave the Patriots control of Lake Champlain, opening Canada to invasion from the south. No real strategy or plans had been established at this time by either side, but on

JUNE 15, 1775

the Continental Congress named George Washington Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. He took command in Cambridge, Mass., on July 3 and under his able and dedicated leadership began six years of torturous and frustrating maneuvers which would, however, eventually result in the American victory. Boston had been occupied by British General Gage for months and became the focal point for a gathering of militiamen referred to as the "New England Army." It was under the command of Artemas Ward and eventually it was decided to fortify Bunker and Breed's hills on the Charlestown Peninsula.



JUNE 17, 1775

General Gage awakened to see the twin hills black with the figures of trench-digging Colonials. 2250 British troops were quickly dispatched to retain the newly fortified hills and over a thousand of them became casualties before the hills were taken. The Patriots finally made an orderly retreat having suffered about half the casualties the British had. The position was of little strategic value and a costly victory for the British. But most importantly, the battle instilled in the British officers and soldiers a new respect for the American fighting man and those who had fought there would never again take the colonial soldier lightly. But victories were few and far between for the Patriots and on

DECEMBER 30, 1775

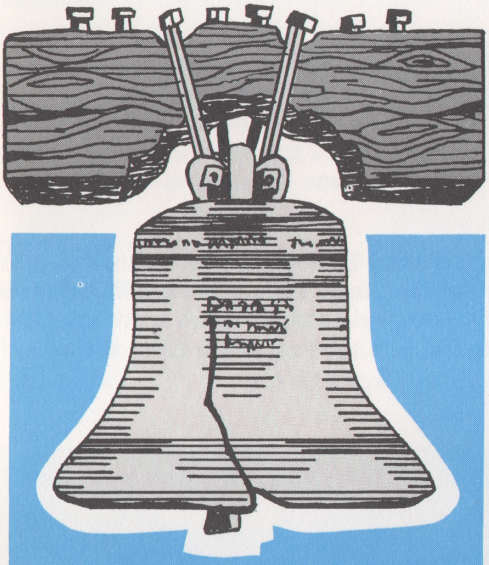
Americans attempting to conquer Canada fought near the city of Quebec. Over half of the American forces were killed, wounded or captured, the battle was lost and Canada was fated to stay, permanently, a British possession. So far the Americans, considering themselves to be British subjects engaged in a sort of civil revolt, had been fighting only to force Britain to adopt policies more agreeable to her American subjects, but Patriot leaders were beginning to think of complete independence from Britain.

JULY 2, 1776

A Declaration of Independence was presented to the Continental Congress by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia and on

JULY 4, 1776

it was adopted by the Congress and henceforward the Americans would be fighting to become a free and independent nation. This commitment to complete independence changed the thinking, philosophy and directions of the revolt. It did not, unfortunately, immediately change the fortunes of war.



"Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof"

AUGUST 27-28, 1776

At a confrontation at Long Island, New York, the Americans, unprepared for the British flanking attack, were routed, suffering about 1500 casualties. The crushing defeat opened Manhattan Island to easy invasion, and forced General Washington to begin his retreat to the Delaware River.

Less than a month later, the Patriots lost one of their outstanding leaders, when on

SEPTEMBER 22, 1776

Nathan Hale, American patriot, was hanged as a spy by the British. His last words were, "I regret I have only one life to lose for my country." But there were occasional victories and on

DECEMBER 26, 1776

General Washington, aware that the British had gone into winter quarters in Trenton, led 2400 Patriots across the Delaware River, where he surprised and routed the Hessian garrison of 1500 men, capturing over 900. It was a great victory for Washington.

JUNE 14, 1777

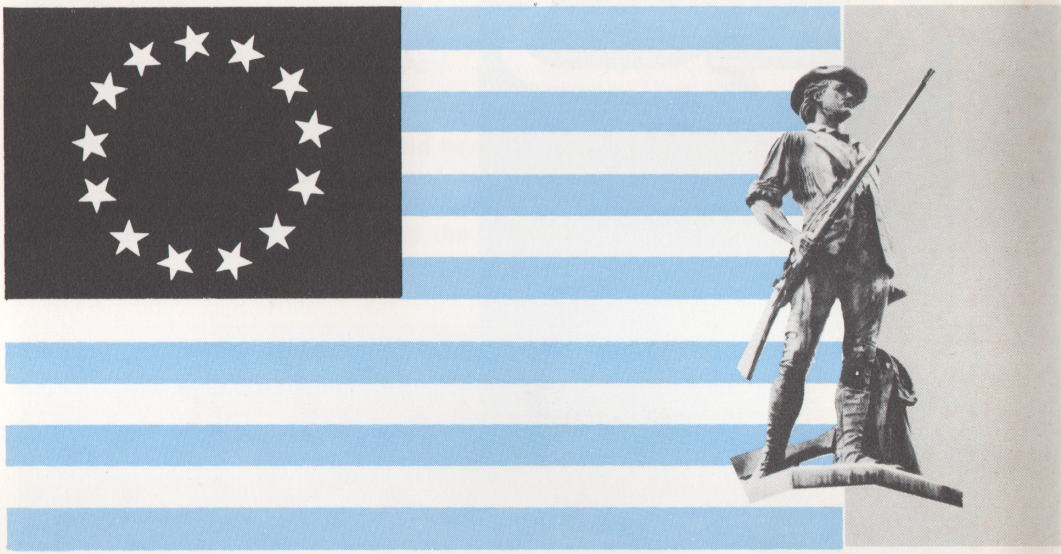
The flag of the United States was adopted by Resolution in the Continental Congress. The flag was first raised over Port Stanwix, N.Y., although it was first under fire . . .

AUGUST 3, 1777

at the Battle of Oriskany at Fort Stanwix, N.Y., where on

AUGUST 6, 1777

in Oriskany, New York, near Ft. Stanwix (Shuyler) 800 Patriot militia marched to relieve Ft. Stanwix which was besieged by British troops. Ambushed by 400 Indians and British Rangers, each side suffered severe casualties. However, their stand made it possible for the garrison at Ft. Stanwix to hold out until Benedict Arnold arrived with 1000 troops from Ft. Dayton. A few days later on



AUGUST 16, 1777

four miles northwest of Bennington, Vt. in New York State, 2600 untrained Continental militia fought, routing 1400 British and Hessian troops sent to capture supplies at Bennington. The American victory also exposed the left flank of the British army which was moving from Canada down the Hudson River Valley, causing them delays and slowing their advance. The Americans were beginning to win some battles, and the resulting optimism made it a little easier to get men and supplies.

SEPTEMBER 11, 1777

General Washington, with 8,000 Continental soldiers and 3,000 militia, met 15,000 British at Brandywine, southwest of Philadelphia. Considerably outnumbered, the Patriots were forced to retreat, assuring British occupation of Philadelphia.

SEPTEMBER 19, 1777

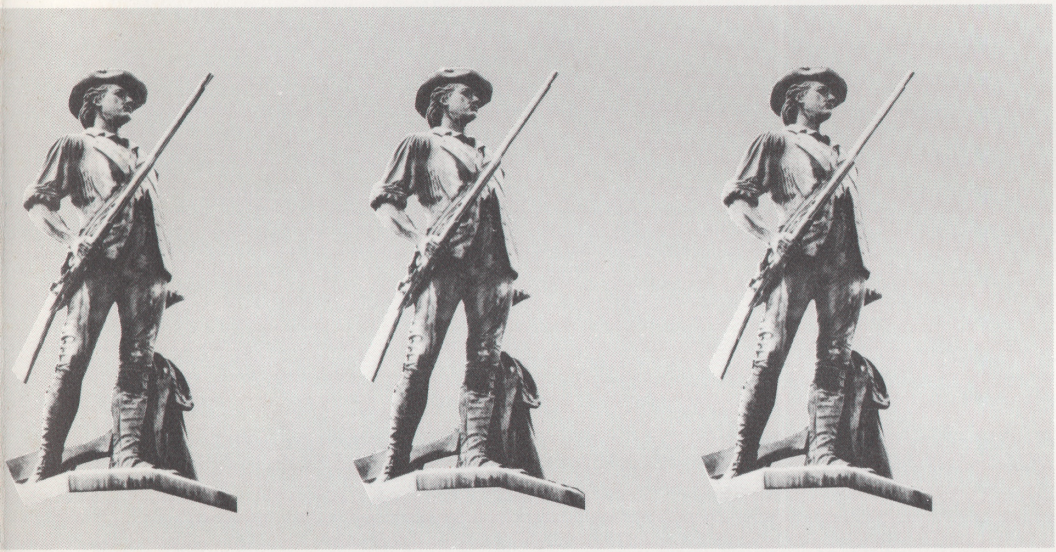
At Freeman's Farm, the British under General Burgoyne utterly failed to turn the Patriot left wing in action and temporarily withdrew and when on

OCTOBER 7, 1777

Burgoyne made a second attempt to outmaneuver the Americans, he was confronted by General Horatio Gates at Freeman's Farm with three columns. When the fighting ended at dusk, Burgoyne retreated to Saratoga, where he and his army surrendered on October 17. The American victory ended British plans to reduce New England, and brought France into the war as an ally of the United States. An event of major importance occurred on

OCTOBER 17, 1777

when the Marquis De la Fayette (Lafayette) at age 20, was made a Major General in the American Army and thus began a lasting friendship with General Washington. One of the most difficult periods of the war was about to begin, however, when, during the

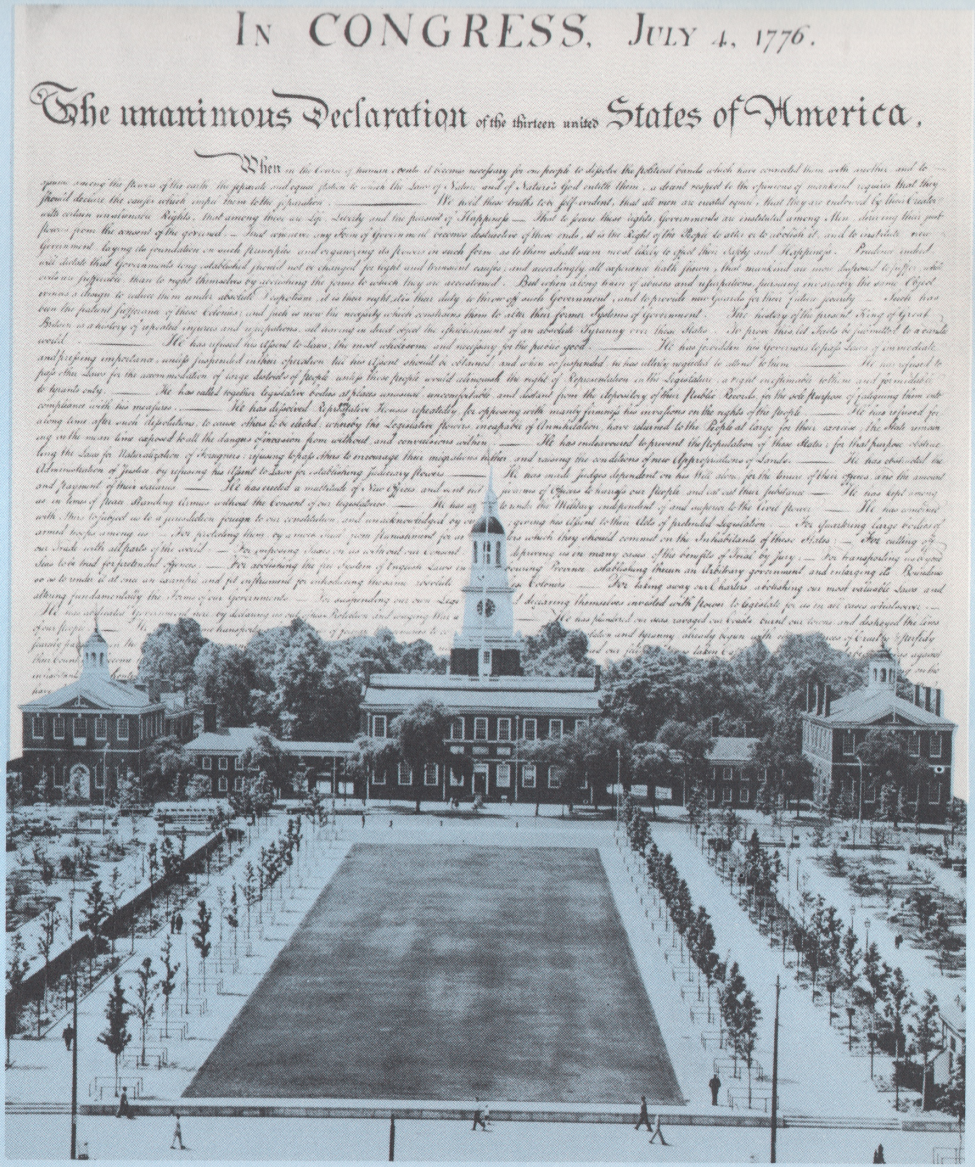


WINTER, 1777

General Washington and his troops headquartered at Valley Forge, suffering incredible hardships, almost to the point of starvation. The Commander-in-Chief was deeply moved by the courage and loyalty of the men under the most trying conditions. Then, the following summer, in

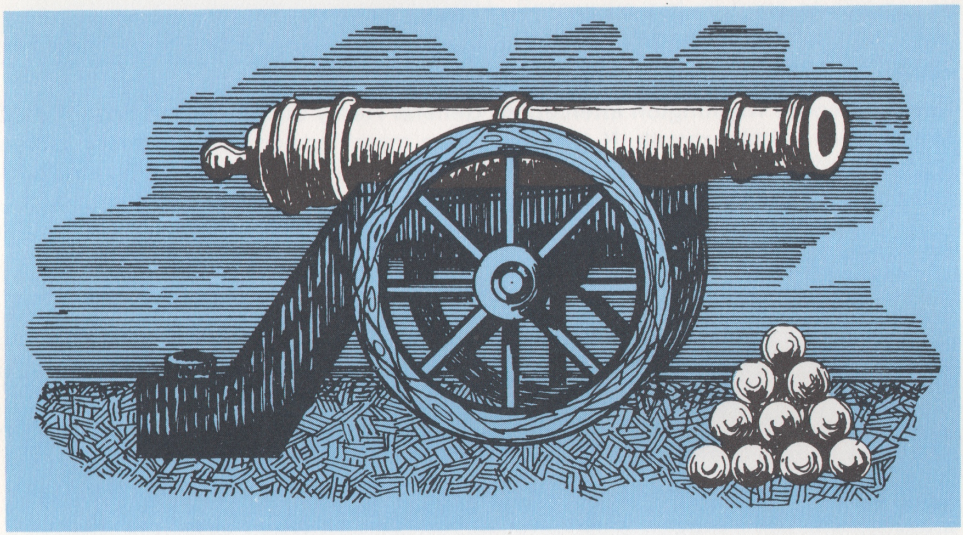
JUNE, 1778

Sir Henry Clinton replaced Sir William Howe as Commander of all British forces in North America, and received orders from London to send 5000 men to the West Indies for immediate attack on French St. Lucia; and another 3000 to St. Augustine, Florida. He was to embark his entire Philadelphia command for New York, and North America would temporarily be a minor theatre in the war.



THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

By the summer of 1779, the Revolutionary War was half over—and somehow the Americans had endured and were still fighting. The agonizing winter at Valley Forge was now history and the men who had suffered through it had become a better fighting machine. A handful of regiments which had begun fighting in 1776 formed the hard core of the Continental Army. They were now not only dedicated and tough soldiers but three years of fighting had developed them into an experienced and disciplined elite force. American industry was producing more of the needed supplies, a navy was taking shape and perhaps most importantly, the patriotism and determination of men fighting on their own soil provided a morale which could not be attained by the British soldiers and German mercenaries.



THE POSSIBLE DREAM

France had become an active ally which very soon would send to America four infantry regiments, the finest fighting men of the entire French army. In 1778 the Americans had received from France shipments of uniforms which equipped almost the entire Continental army and aside from the obvious utilitarian value, were invaluable as morale-builders. Not only the Hessian mercenaries, but many English soldiers were deserting. Of the 30,000 German mercenaries sent to America, only about 18,000 returned to Europe at the end of the war. An American artillery force had developed; Pennsylvania and Massachusetts foundries had begun casting cannons in 1773, and by 1779 there were a considerable number of them, and gunners had been trained to use them. Americans had been waging and studying war now for several years and their new expertise was a reflection of this experience. The 13 colonies had become a nation, its flag saluted formally for the first time in February, 1778 by French ships a week after the signing of the French Treaty of Alliance. In August of the same year our first diplomat, Conrad Gerard, was accepted as French Foreign Minister. Captain John Paul Jones, in his new ship Ranger, captured the Drake, a British sloop-of-war and later in the year conquered the Serapis in the North Sea. Our army had achieved some victories, and now our navy as well. To the American anger at the beginning of the war, now was added a national pride. The dream of independence did not seem such an impossible one—and the war continued.

"The love of liberty is interwoven with every ligament of the heart."

G. Washington

JUNE 28, 1779

General George Washington intercepted General Henry Clinton with almost 10,000 British troops at Monmouth, N.J. as they were marching across New Jersey to New York after their evacuation of Philadelphia. The battle ended indecisively for both sides as Washington held the field, but Clinton was able to move his troops safely to New York. The following winter control of the Ohio territory was seized by the Americans, when on

FEBRUARY 23, 1779

George Rogers Clark, authorized by the Virginia Assembly to conquer the Illinois country, journeyed 1200 miles with 200 men, and captured Kaskaskia, Illinois on July 4, 1778, then led 130 men against Henry Hamilton at Vincennes. Hamilton, with a force of 250 Loyalists and Indians, surrendered. Clark was unable to attack Detroit as he had hoped, but secured control of the Northwest.

OCTOBER 9, 1779

French Admiral d'Estang landed 3500 troops in response to Patriot pleas for aid in recovering Savannah, Georgia. Along with 1500 Continental and militia troops under General Benjamin Lincoln, he besieged the city, held by 2400 British troops; however, their attempt to take the city by storm was repulsed, enabling British Commander Clinton to attack South Carolina in force, and in

APRIL/MAY, 1780

Charleston, S.C. was besieged by Clinton. Although defended by 5000 American troops under Lincoln, who fought doggedly for six weeks, the Americans were finally forced to surrender and South Carolina was under British control.

AUGUST 16, 1780

The American forces suffered a disastrous defeat at Camden, S.C. and North Carolina was exposed to easy invasion by the British. However, on

OCTOBER 7, 1780

inflamed by British oppression, a band of 900 militia from North Carolina and the Virginia backwoods pursued and cornered a party of about 1100 Loyalists at Kings Mountain. His military force destroyed, Lord Cornwallis was forced to retreat to Camden and assume a defensive attitude, and on

JANUARY 17, 1781

The battle fought in "Hannah's Cowpens" in South Carolina caused devastating losses to the British, greatly weakening Cornwallis' prospects of overrunning North Carolina. A final blow to the British hopes of holding the South was dealt to them on

MARCH 15, 1781

at Guilford Courthouse. Regrouping forces, 1700 Continentals and 2800 militia moved across the Dan River into North Carolina where they were attacked at Guilford by Lord Cornwallis with about 2400 troops, forcing them to withdraw; however, British losses were more than Cornwallis was able to sustain, and he proceeded on the long march to Yorktown, while the Patriots began to recover the South. The war was nearly over, Cornwallis was besieged at Yorktown, Virginia, from

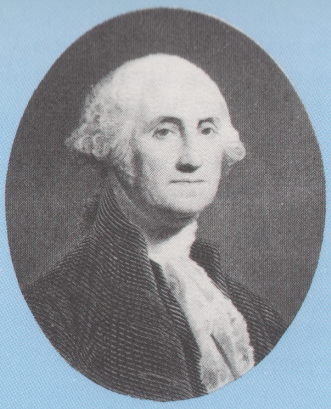
SEPTEMBER 28 - OCTOBER 19, 1781

by General Washington who had covered Yorktown on the land side with 17,000 French and American troops. Entrenched there with 7,000 troops, and his British fleet of 19 ships having been turned back, Cornwallis lost all hope of escape. He surrendered on October 19, virtually ending the War. Two years later on

NOVEMBER 25, 1783

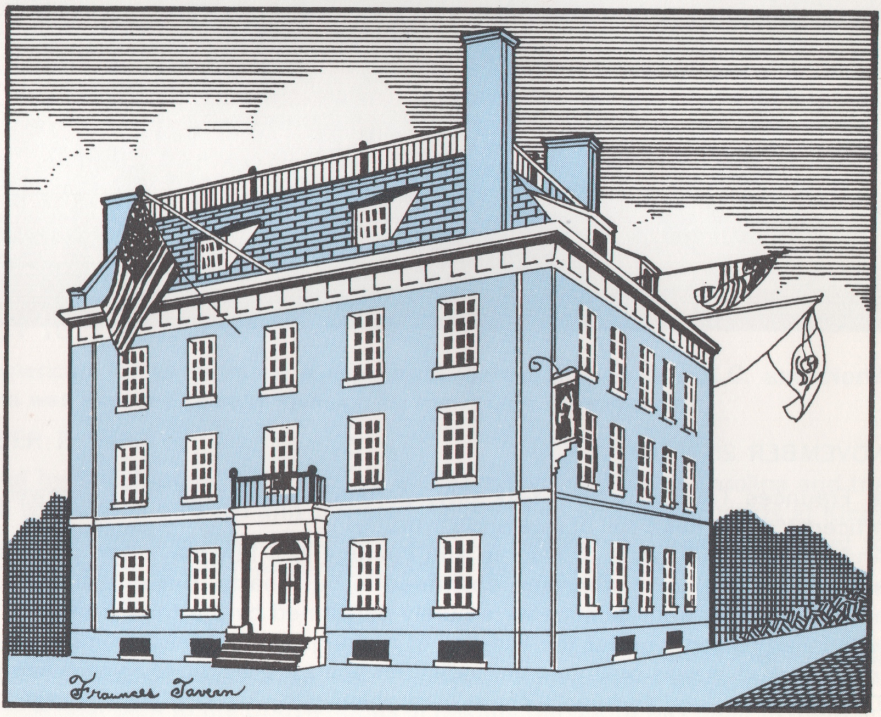
at Fraunces Tavern in New York City, General Washington bade farewell to his officers "with a heart full of love and gratitude."

And so it was over. Acts of wisdom and courage of a few brave and patriotic men are recorded in our history and enshrined in our hearts. But untold numbers of acts of fortitude and sacrifice were surely performed by the thousands of Patriots who failed to come under the scrutiny of historians, their deeds buried with them in unmarked graves or under the indistinct epitaphs inscribed in thin sandstone. To these men, who endured without permanent glory, we also pay homage.



WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

No man ever left a nobler political testament than that contained in President Washington's Valedictory Address on September 17, 1796, after he had refused to accept the Presidency for the third term. Every word sounded the purest and wisest patriotism. In singularly beautiful language he expressed his gratitude for the high honor paid him by the people of the United States.



Friends and Fellow-Citizens:

The period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant . . . it appears to me proper . . . that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, . . . urge me . . . to offer . . . some sentiments . . . which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence; the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity in every shape, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that from different causes, and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union as a whole.

. . . I anticipate the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow-citizens the benign influence of good laws under a free government, . . . the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors and dangers.

THE BILL OF RIGHTS

The first ten amendments to the Constitution were added during the two-year period from 1789 (when a sufficient number of states had ratified to place the Constitution in effect) to 1791. They were born of a widespread belief that the Constitution as it stood did not sufficiently guarantee individual liberties, and are known as the Bill of Rights.

I

Article I guarantees the freedom of worship, of speech, of the press, of assembly, and of petition to the government for redress of grievances.

II

Article II guarantees the right to bear arms, pertaining to the State Militia.

III

Article III guarantees that no soldier shall be quartered in a citizen's home without his free consent, or process of law during time of war.

IV

Article IV guarantees security from search without recourse to warrant.

V

Article V guarantees safety from arrest without indictment by Grand Jury; from double jeopardy; from testifying against himself; from deprivation of life, liberty or property without process of law; from seizure of private property for public use.

VI

Article VI guarantees the right to speedy public trial, knowledge of the charge against him, and assistance of counsel.

VII

Article VII guarantees trial by jury in common law suits where the sum involved shall exceed $20.

VIII

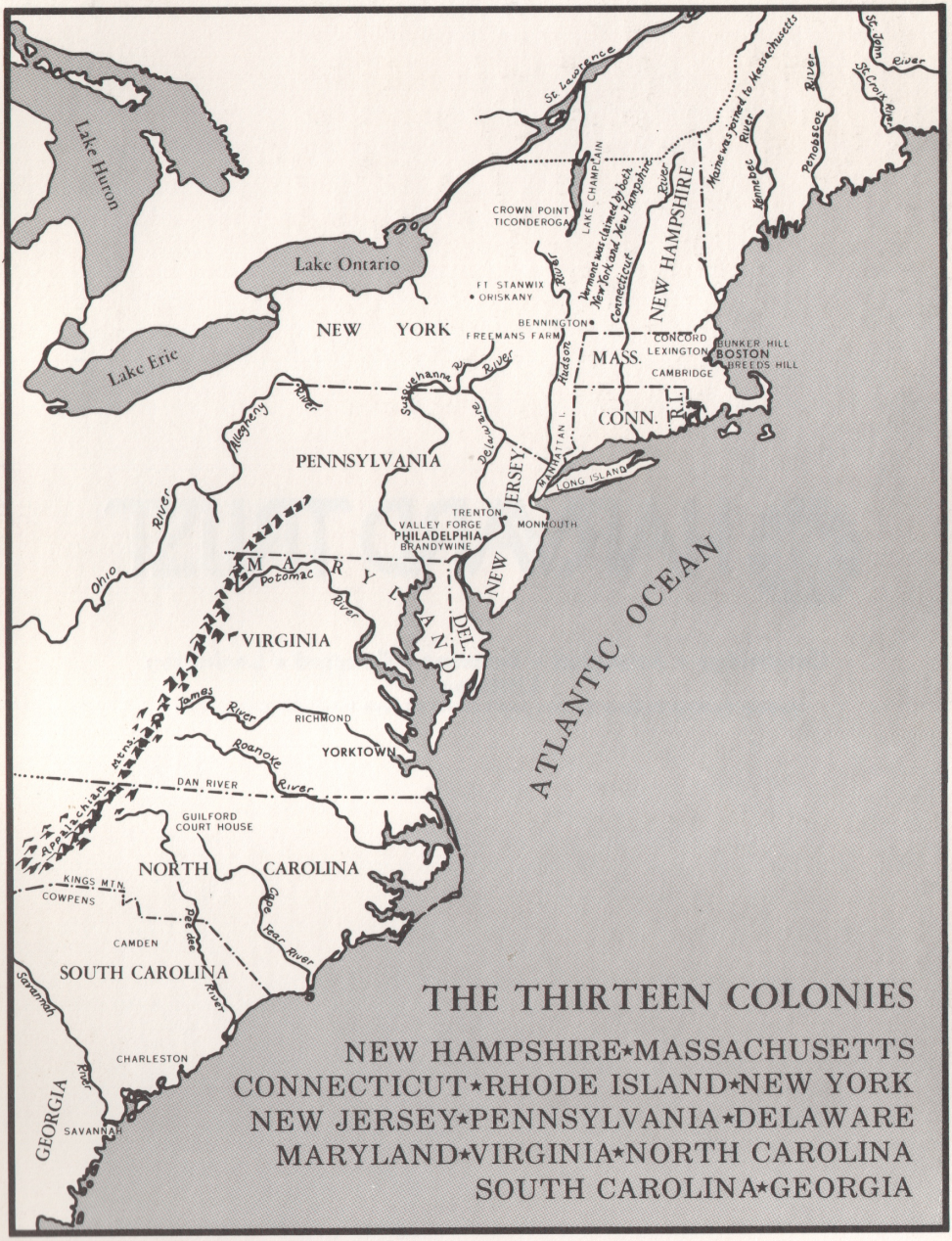
Article VIII restricts excessive bail or fines, and cruel or unusual punishment.

IX

Article IX guarantees that the statement of rights in the Constitution shall not be construed to deny others held by the people.

X

Article X reserves to the States powers not expressly delegated to the United States by Constitution, nor prohibited by it.



THE THIRTEEN COLONIES

NEW HAMPSHIRE★MASSACHUSETTS
CONNECTICUT★RHODE ISLAND★NEW YORK
NEW JERSEY★PENNSYLVANIA★DELAWARE
MARYLAND★VIRGINIA★NORTH CAROLINA
SOUTH CAROLINA★GEORGIA

Cambridge • Arlington • Belmont • Concord • Lexington
Littleton

Member Federal Reserve System And Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation